

## Legal, PR Teams Can Work Together

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From HBC's Sound Bites Blog ([www.hellermanbaretz.com/soundbites](http://www.hellermanbaretz.com/soundbites))

Yesterday's [New York Times business feature about crisis management](#) has undoubtedly been the talk around many PR water coolers today. The *Times* uses the crises facing BP, Toyota, and Goldman Sachs to take a closer look at crisis management. Although the article raises a number of interesting and controversial questions, one aspect was particularly troubling: the assumption that a company's PR and legal teams are often combative and undermine one another. Communications strategist Eric Dezenhall's thoughts capture this assumed dynamic: "The lawyers are trying to get the P.R. consultants fired and the P.R. consultants are criticizing the lawyers. Everybody despises each other."

But is this always the case? Not with us, which is why we're so surprised by Dezenhall's take. Our firm does a lot of work on sensitive and litigious matters. We're frequently charged with crafting and implementing strategic communications plans that involve confidential material and must complement an existing (or still developing) legal strategy. We don't despise the attorneys we work with on these projects; it's quite the opposite. We all recognize that as a team we must act collectively for our client.

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